

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4367
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 781

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION FROM AMBASSADOR

CARACAS FOR RSO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC
SUBJ: PROGRAM TO COMBAT TERRORISM: EMBASSY SECURITY

REF: STATE 119510

1. REFTEL "URGES" CHIEFS OF MISSION TO REVIEW AND INSURE COMPLIANCE WITH MINIMUM SECURITY STANDARDS ESTABLISHED IN BOOKLET SENT TO FIELD WITH A-4779, NOV 29, 1977, BUT ALSO SAYS TO BRING IT TO YOUR ATTENTION IF WE "DISAGREE WITH THE APPROACH RECOMMENDED." IT IS HARD FOR ME TO TELL WHETHER THSES CONSTITUTE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT WHICH ARE MANDATORY (AND IF SO WE WILL NATURALLY COMPLY) OR WHETHER THEY ARE "RECOMMENDATIONS" WHICH ARE TO BE ADAPTED TO LOCAL CONDITIONS.

2. SITUATION IN PARAMARIBO IS AT ODDS WITH LISTED MINIMUM STANDARDS AND THIS FACT IS KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT AND TO THE REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER. 77 PARAMARIDOHJGCOT OUTLINED THE THEN STATUS OF OUR PUBLIC ACCESS CONTROL, WHICH HAS SINCE BEEN CHANGED SOLELY BY THE ADDITION OF AN UNARMED GUARD-
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 PARAMA 00781 010855Z

RECEPTIONIST WHO IDENTIFIES VISITORS ON OUR SIXTH FLOOR AS THEY COME IN. WE HAVE NO PHYSICAL BARRIERS. IT IS OUR INTENTION, IN LINE WITH AN RSO RECOMMENDATION, TO EMPLOY A SECOND GUARD-RECEPTIONIST, FOR OUR OTHER FLOOR, THE FIFTH FLOOR, IN CONNECTION WITH THE OPENING OF THE ICA OFFICES ON THAT FLOOR, AND WE ARE NOW RECRUITING.

3. WE HAD A SECURITY SURVEY DONE BY THE RSO IN NOVEMBER, 1977. WE NEVER RECEIVED A COPY OF A FINISHED REPORT, BUT THE WORK COPY WHICH WAS LEFT WITH US SHOWS A "X" IN THE "YES" BOX FOR THE QUESTION "F. ARE VISITOR AND EMPLOYEE ENTRANCE CONTROLS DURING AND AFTER WORKING HOURS ADEQUATE?"

4. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT OR EVEN APPRECIABLE THREAT TO THIS EMBASSY FROM INTERNAL SURINAM FACTORS. IN THIS OPEN SOCIETY, FOR US TO PUT PHYSICAL BARRIERS IN OUR CONSULAR AND ICA SECTIONS TO CONTROL VISITORS WOULD HAVE A DEFINITE ADVSERSE PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFECT. THE EFFECT OF SUCH BARRIERS ON THE FLOOR OCCUPIED BY THE AMBASSADOR, POL/ECON, ADMIN AND C&R SECTIONS WOULD BE LESS BUT STILL UNDESIRABLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR GUARD IS NOT ARMED AND WE WOULD NOT WANT TO HAVE HIM ARMED, NOR DO WE WANT AMERICAN PERSONNEL TO CARRY OR HAVE WEAPONS CLOSE AT HAND. IN THE EVENT OF A DETERMINED NON-SURINAMESE TERRORIST ATTACK (E.G. BY RED ARMY OR RED BRIGADE) WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, THEREFORE, THE MINIMUM-TYPE PHYSICAL BARRIERS IN THE DEPARTMENT'S BOOKLET WOULD PROVIDE ONLY A MOMENTARY OBSTACLE.

5. LEFT TO OURSELVES, IT WOULD BE OUR DECISION TO GO ON AS WE ARE, WITH THE ADDITION, AS NOTED ABOVE, OF A GUARD-RECEPTIONIST ON THE FLOOR NOW NOT GUARDED. BUT WE REALIZE THAT WE ARE NOT EXPERTS. PLEAUE CLARIFY WHERE WE STAND BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION. IF THE ANSWER
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PARAMA 00781 010855Z

IS THAT WE MUST PROCEED WITH PHYSICAL BARRIERS, THEN WE WILL NEED PROFESSIONAL SECURITY HELP FROM WASHINGTON OR THE RSO AS THERE ARE NO QUALIFIED EXPERTS AVAILABLE HERE.
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